

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An environmental performance improvement support system, comprising:

a material composition database that organizes composition information of materials as a database;

a controlled substance database that organizes control information ~~related to~~ of chemical substances ~~as a control target~~, as a database;

a release rate database that organizes information ~~related to~~ of the release rates ~~at each release-transfer destination~~ of said chemical substances as a control target in a ~~certain~~ predetermined process as a database, stores the information of said release rates in said predetermined process for each of a plurality of types of equipment, and sets said release rates with respect to input amounts of materials input into said each of the plurality of types of equipment used in said predetermined process; and

a server configured to calculate: (a) release amounts ~~to each release-transfer destination~~ of said chemical substances as said control target that compose said materials input in the ~~certain~~ predetermined process based on the types and input amounts of the materials input in the ~~certain~~ predetermined process, said material composition database, said controlled substance database

and said release rate database; [[and]] (b) information for improving the environmental performance, according to information on ~~these~~ said chemical substances as said control target that are released; and

~~wherein said release rate database stores the information related to said release rates for each equipment that is used in said certain process, said release rates are set based on the release information that prescribes the relationship of the release amounts to each release transfer destination of the chemical substances as said control target with respect to the input amounts of the materials that are input into said each equipment used in said certain process;~~  
and

~~said server configured to calculate, (c) for said each~~ of the plurality of types of equipment, environmental performance information that evaluates environmental effects due to discharging the calculated release amounts ~~calculated~~ of said chemical substances as said control target ~~and/or investment effectiveness information related to the~~ including costs for reducing said chemical substances as said control target that are released.

2. (Previously Presented) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 1, wherein:

said environmental performance information evaluates environmental effects based on at least one impact factor from among impact factors on human health, impact factors on amenities, impact factors on ground subsidence, impact factors on ground water pollution and soil pollution, impact factors on air

pollution, impact factors on water quality pollution, impact factors on stress on waste treatment capacity, impact factors on acid precipitation, impact factors on global warming, impact factors on ozone layer destruction, and impact factors on resource depletion.

3. (Previously Presented) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 1, wherein:

said investment effectiveness information is based on at least one item from among the processing performances, equipment costs, and operation costs of equipments that reduce said chemical substances that are released.

4. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 1, wherein:

the equipment[[s]] used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process consists of a combination of ~~a plurality of equipments~~ two or more of the plurality of types of equipment; and

said environmental performance information ~~and/or~~ said investment effectiveness information [[are]] is based on the combination of said ~~plurality of~~ equipment[[s]].

5. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 1, wherein:

said release information is represented in at least one of graph format, table format, ~~or with~~ functional equations, ~~or is represented by~~ and a combination of these formats for each equipment that is used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process.

6. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system according to claim 1, wherein:

said system is configured to output information ~~related to~~ of an enterpriser that performs said ~~certain~~ predetermined process;

at least one information type from among a handled amount, release amount, release rate, and recycle rate of each chemical substance is ~~related~~ compared to the release rates of another enterpriser in the same industry; and

said system is configured to output information that compares information ~~related to~~ of the release rates of said enterpriser and said another enterpriser in the same industry.

7. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system according to claim 1, wherein:

said system is configured to output information ~~related to~~ of an enterpriser that performs said ~~certain~~ predetermined process; and

said system is configured to output time-lapse changes of at least one information type from among a handled amount, release amount, release rate,

and recycle rate of each chemical substance ~~related to~~ of the release rates of said enterpriser.

8. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system according to claim 1, wherein said system is configured to output:  
information related to an enterpriser that performs said ~~certain~~  
predetermined process;

information of time-lapse changes of at least one from among a handled amount, release amount, release rate, and recycle rate of each chemical substance, of another enterpriser in the same industry; and

information that compares time-lapse changes of at least one from among the handled amount, release amount, release rate, and recycle rate of each chemical substance between said enterpriser and said other enterpriser in the same industry.

9. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system according to claim 1, wherein information related to said release rates is based on the equipment-specific release rate information that is provided by enterprisers that manufacture ~~equipments which are~~ the plurality of types of equipment used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process.

10. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 9, wherein:

said investment effectiveness information is based on at least one item from among the processing performances, equipment costs, and operation costs of ~~equipments~~ the plurality of types of equipment that reduce chemical substances, which are provided by the enterprisers ~~that manufacture the equipments which reduce the chemical substances.~~

11. (Previously Presented) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 9 or claim 10, wherein:

the equipment-specific release rate information provided by said enterprisers prescribes the relationship of the release amounts to each release-transfer destination of chemical substances that correspond to the input amounts of the materials that are input into equipments.

12. (Currently Amended) An environmental performance improvement support method, ~~wherein: environmental performance improvement is supported based on a material composition database that organizes composition information of materials as a database, a controlled substance database that organizes control information related to chemical substances as a control target as a database, and a release rate database that organizes information related to the release rates at each release-transfer destination of chemical substances as a database, the method comprising the acts of:~~

organizing a material composition database including composition information of materials;

organizing a controlled substance database including control information of chemical substances as a control target;

organizing a release rate database including release rate information of the chemical substances;

~~process 1, which utilizes a server to identify~~ identifying the chemical substances that compose the materials to be ~~input used~~ in a certain predetermined process, ~~based on~~ by accessing said material composition database;

~~process 2, which utilizes the server to identify~~ determining which of the identified chemical substances that must be managed, ~~from among the chemical substances identified in said process 1 based on~~ by accessing said controlled substance database;

~~process 3, which utilizes the server to set~~ determining the release amounts ~~to the release transfer destinations of the~~ managed chemical substances for each of a plurality of types of equipment, identified in said process 2 based on by accessing said release rate database;

~~process 4, which utilizes the server to evaluate~~ evaluating environmental effects of the predetermined process due to discharging the chemical substances in the determined release amounts; ~~set in said process 3; and~~

~~process 5, which, based on the evaluation results of said process 4,~~ evaluates the evaluating effectiveness of each of the plurality of types of equipment that reduce in reducing said discharged chemical substances, ~~which are released.~~ based on the evaluated environmental effects; and

outputting effectiveness data to a user.

13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support method recited in claim 12, further comprising the act of:

~~process 6, which, based on the evaluation results of said process 5,~~  
~~evaluates environmental effects in the case of equipments that reduce said~~  
~~chemical substances are installed~~ comparing the environmental effects of using  
each of the plurality of types of equipment in the predetermined process, based  
on the evaluated effectiveness of each of the plurality of types of equipment.

15. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 2, wherein:

the equipment[[s]] used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process consists of a combination of ~~a plurality of equipments~~ two or more of the plurality of types of equipment; and

said environmental performance information ~~and/or~~ said investment effectiveness information ~~are~~ is based on the combination of said ~~plurality of~~ equipment[[s]].

16. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 3, wherein:



the equipment[[s]] used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process consists of a combination of ~~a plurality of equipments~~ two or more of the plurality of types of equipment; and

said environmental performance information ~~and/or~~ said investment effectiveness information ~~are~~ is based on the combination of said ~~plurality of~~ equipment[[s]].

17. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 2, ~~wherein~~ further comprising:

a communication terminal configured to display said release information [[is]] represented in at least one of graph format, table format, ~~or with~~ functional equations, ~~or is represented by~~ and a combination of these formats for each equipment that is used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process.

18. (Currently Amended) The environmental performance improvement support system recited in claim 3, ~~wherein~~ further comprising:

a communication terminal configured to display said release information [[is]] represented in at least one of graph format, table format, ~~or with~~ functional equations, ~~or is represented by~~ and a combination of these formats for each equipment that is used in said ~~certain~~ predetermined process.